A Bachelor of Arts in Criminology is an interesting mix of law, sociology and psychology. The legal side looks at how criminals/offenders are dealt with by the courts, police and correctional facilities; sociology looks at the social and cultural factors contributing to crime; and psychology looks at the criminal mind itself. Careers in this discipline can therefore be just as diverse.

Criminology tackles both the causes and the effects of crime, as well as providing methodology for how to best deal with criminals in a manner that encourages their rehabilitation rather than recidivism. The work varies according to the setting and the individual’s skillset. For example, you could be collecting data and collating/interpreting statistics based on types of crime and other cultural issues such as socio-economic backgrounds and age of offenders, or you could be contributing to policy, designing co-curricular programs on anti-bullying campaigns, conducting research, writing behaviour assessments and intervention plans or working directly with offenders to assist with their rehabilitation.

Careers in Criminology:
Pathways, Challenges and Success

Engage in your career before you graduate

Being active in the community – particularly in lower socio-economic areas where support groups and services exist for indigenous people, youth, migrants, women and children for example will add to your employability for when you graduate. Think about the group or the environment you are interested in working with and how you can get involved with local groups or projects aimed at reducing the risk of offending. Here are some ideas:

- The Salvation Army supports dependants, informants, victims and witnesses at courts. They also offer representation, rehabilitation, prison and post-release services. One of their programs, Employment Plus, provides work for former prisoners. For example, you could help with clients’ job applications, and assist them to research the job market (basically imparting your fine written communication and research skills developed in your degree, together with your motivation skills).
- Keep an eye open for internships as part of your degree through Work Integrated Learning (WIL). For example, an internship with the Evidence Based Policing Unit at the WA Police.
- Become a Drumbeat Facilitator through Holyoake (holyoake.com.au)
- Volunteer for the Dept of the Attorney General’s Victim Support Companion initiative where training is provided.
- Seek relevant part-time work that involves residential care for youth at risk.
- Participate in the Youth Diversion program run by the PCYC
- Become a Reconciliation Leader for community initiatives such as the Lockridge Community Gardens (see volunteeringwa.org.au)
- The Murdoch Volunteering Hub can direct you to further opportunities.
- Become an AIME Mentor or K-Track Tutor (or mentor)
- Join/contribute to Midnight Basketball or Natureplay
- Be active in your student association. Don’t have one? Start one.
Careers in Criminology: Pathways, Challenges and Success

Adaptability of your Criminology degree and alternative careers

Graduates are valued for their research, writing, critical thinking and analytical skills. These can be utilised in a range of administrative roles in the private, public and NFP sectors. If you have strong interpersonal skills, then you could be a Youth Worker, Human Rights Advocate, Union Officer, or a Mediation Specialist. Undertaking postgraduate studies such as Addiction Studies can create a new, yet related specialisation. NFPs such as Holyoake offer training courses in counselling to assist clients and their families in the recovery process. Other careers to consider are:

- Gambling Advisor (casinos)
- Coordinator – Graffiti Diversion programs
- Residential Advisor/Mental Health Worker (foster care)
- Disability Worker
- Border Protection Officer (immigration)
- Customs Officer
- Fraud Investigator (insurance companies)
- Liaison Officer/Team Leader – homelessness programs
- Crime Writer/Film/Documentary Maker
- Operational Risk Manager (banks)
- Refugee Worker
- Equity Officer

Useful Links

CriminologyTV on youtube
Australian Institute of Criminology aic.gov.au
Crime Research Centre www.crc.law.uwa.edu.au
Criminology Research Council Australia criminologyresearchcouncil.gov.au
Graduate Opportunities Directory graduateopportunities.com
Myfuture.edu.au

Careers in Criminology

Graduates are likely to work in corrections and rehabilitation, in customs, law enforcement, research and policy analysis, juvenile justice, criminal investigation, and community-based support agencies. Local, state and federal government, as well as not-for-profit organisations are the major employer groups, and in more recent times, private industry has been securing tenders for managing prisons and detention centres.

Good cross-fertilisation between disciplines exists with criminology. Combined with IT or Cyber Forensics, you could pursue a career as a Cybercrime Analyst. Digital technology supports the global financial services industry but also opens up opportunities for fraud and misappropriation that only a few years ago would not have existed. With Media Studies, Crime Reporting/Journalist; with Women’s Studies, Psychology or Sociology, a Domestic Violence Specialist (relevant government agencies and, Ourwatch.org.au) might be for you; with Honours or Masters by Research, you can work in policy, advisory or consultancy roles. If you combine Criminology with Environmental Science, then consider environmental criminology.

Other potential combinations are forensic science, security and counterterrorism, and law. As you gather experience, good starting roles might be debt collection or working for insurance companies to detect workers compensation fraud.

The Graduate Destination Survey and Alumni on LinkedIn identified the following careers for those holding degrees in Criminology:

- Field Researcher (Drug and Alcohol)
- Graduate Recruitment (Government eg Australian Bureau of Statistics, Corrective Services, AFP, Defence, ASIS/ASIO, ACCC, WA Police, Children’s and Community Services et al)
- Community liaison roles for community safety initiatives with local govt
- Restorative Justice Officer
- Prison Officer/Correctional Officer/Youth Custodial Officer/Peer Support Officer
- Case Manager (courts, community agencies)
- Probation Officer
- Policy Officer/Analyst
- Programs Facilitator (Corrective Services)
- Private Investigator
- Detective (entry must be via the general police training academy first)